

# Light:

A Journal devoted to the Highest Interests of Humanity, both  
Here and Hereafter.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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Transmission Abroad.]

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## LIGHT:

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HERE AND HEREAFTER.

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Published every Saturday

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There is a large class of people who believe in a world which they call "the present," and who assert that no knowledge of any other is attainable.

There is another large class of people who believe also in a world they call "the next," and who also assert that no other knowledge of it is attainable than that which has been handed down to them.

There is yet another class of people—usually known as "Spiritualists"—who believe in the existence of facts and phenomena, accessible to those who will seek for them, demonstrating the existence of another world than the present, and who believe that, on the basis of these facts, a science and a philosophy may be built up furnishing a key to the problems of Life and Mind, and uniting both these worlds in one harmonious whole.

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## THE EARNEST INQUIRER.

### I.

A trivial occurrence, or a passing remark, may frequently be the earliest awakener of serious thought in regard to the much misunderstood, and often much despised, subject of "Spiritualism." In this way the first real desire may be aroused to ascertain whether there is "anything in it;" and when interest is once excited there are, doubtless, many who find themselves unable entirely to dismiss the question. It recurs again and again, in moments of thought or leisure, with ever-increasing importunity. "Can it be really known whether death is the end or not?" "Is there any truth in the pretensions of these 'Spiritualists' that they have obtained a clue?" "If the 'dead' are still living, is it true that there can be intercourse between us and them?" "I will try and ascertain for myself whether these things be so or not." Thus we have an "earnest inquirer"—not merely one who, from idle, vain, temporary curiosity, thinks he should like to know, but one who feels that he cannot let the matter rest, and that for his own satisfaction he must search it out. We believe there are thousands such, and that the number is increasing daily.

According to the constitution of the individual mind, the question will assume a religious or a scientific aspect. Historical faith in past revelation from a spiritual world may be firm, and there may be an unwavering, intuitive conviction of its reality; but still there may be an ardent and legitimate longing to add to faith, knowledge. Or, on the other hand, the phenomena of life and mind may have been traced back to the structureless mass of protoplasm or bioplasm, when the question remains—What beyond? What causes the infinite variety of development from minute particles of living matter absolutely undistinguishable from each other under the highest powers of the microscope? Starting from the basis of science, is any evidence forthcoming of the truth of the assertions of the "Spiritualists"? In either case we have an "earnest inquirer." What means has he of obtaining an answer to his questions, or of proceeding with his investigations?

The real difficulties of his position have often forcibly presented themselves to our own mind. It is these we wish to make our readers realise, in the hope that they may in some way be mitigated, if not removed.

It may be said, there is plenty of literature. But literature is of very little, if of any, avail at this stage. The facts of Spiritualism—or, addressing our inquirer, we should say the alleged facts—are so entirely at variance with the ideas which nineteenth-century education, supported by ordinary experience, instils into the mind from the cradle, that no amount of reading or weight of testimony of others is of any avail at the commencement. The case is generically different to that of entrance upon the study of any new branch of science or literature. In that case there is common ground to start from, an intimate connection with analogous knowledge already acquired. Here there is nothing of the kind.

The inquirer may be recommended to take certain steps for ascertaining for himself, to "form a circle" with his own friends, and to "sit for manifestations." Those who have tried this know the infinite amount of patience required, and discouragements experienced in such attempts—at least, generally, though there are remarkable exceptions, few and far between. Ignorance

of what is reasonably to be expected, of *how* it is to be expected, and of more or less important physical and mental conditions, renders the attainment of results of value about as improbable as if half a dozen persons ignorant of any ordinary subject were to sit down and expect, without aid from others, to find out much about it in any moderate space of time. This method must be dismissed as of but little practical value.

Again, the inquirer may be recommended to go to "a medium," by which is generally meant a "professional medium," such a one being, of course, the only kind he can "go to" in the ordinary use of the words. He may either go to the advertised public sésances of professional mediums, or he may make private engagements with them. It need hardly be said that the first plan is almost sure to result in grave dissatisfaction, and no wise Spiritualist would recommend that course to an inquirer. The inquirer meets a number of unknown people in a strange house, and, quite independent of the genuineness of the whole affair, the probability is that the more remarkable the phenomena the less will be the amount of conviction which he carries away with him, or which will remain after reflection on the following day.

If the inquirer, in conjunction with one or two of his own friends, makes private arrangements with a medium, especially if at the inquirer's own house, it is likely that much more may be gained. But even then, the inquirers, being ignorant of conditions and of the best and simplest precautions against illusion and delusion, are not favourably situated for obtaining results that will permanently impress them, especially if, as is most likely to be the case, their private acquaintanceship with the medium has not been long enough or intimate enough for them to feel in him the fullest confidence.

One other recommendation remains to be made to our inquirer, and that is to obtain an introduction to a private circle. This is, however, much more easily said than done. In the first place, the best private circles are frequently pursuing investigations of their own, which a stranger would more or less interrupt. And secondly, a visitor under such circumstances is in the position of a guest, and cannot act as an independent investigator, nor demand special conditions to be imposed; consequently, however much confidence he feels in the members of the circle privately, he is unable to disabuse himself of the suspicion that these good people are in some way deceiving themselves, or are unwittingly the victims of others.

It may be said that we have drawn a dismal picture, but we think many of our readers will to a great extent agree with us as to its general truthfulness, and we do not believe that we have exaggerated the difficulties which many an earnest inquirer has felt and still continues to find, and which are now disheartening numbers who would be glad to investigate Spiritualism, and to whom, as well as to the subject itself, such investigation would be attended with benefit.

Next week we hope to take up this matter again, and to discuss what may be done to promote successful investigation by those who may fairly be called "earnest inquirers."

The trial of Mrs. Fletcher is in progress as we go to press. We say nothing on the subject until it is finished.

On either hand we behold a birth, of which, as of the moon, we see but half. We are outside the one, waiting for a life from the unknown; we are inside the other, watching the departure of a spirit from the womb of the world into the unknown. To the region whither he goes, the man enters newly-born. We forget that it is a birth, and call it a death. The body he leaves behind is but the *placenta* by which he drew his nourishment from his mother earth. And as the child-bed is watched on earth with anxious expectancy, so the couch of the dying, as we call them, may be surrounded by the birth-watchers of the other world, waiting like anxious servants to open the door to which this world is but the wind-blown porch.—GEORGE MACDONALD.

## THOUGHTS ON RE-INCARNATION.

By a Kabbalist.

Re-Incarnation is one thing, but the vanity of Re-Incarnationists and their fondness for big and historical names are another and an entirely different and irrelevant matter.

A physical atom undergoes an almost infinite multiplicity of changes, and is absolutely indestructible; how much more must there be for the individual living soul, which is a stray atom of God, an almost interminable sphere of activity for development and progression, until by re-acquisition of her original purity the Soul is once more in harmony with her Maker and returns to the Divine source wherefrom she has issued.

God, as the infinite ocean of life, is a central magnet that sustains the all by Love, Thought, and Force.

In their undescended state the individual living souls *consciously* live and have their being in God. This is the Soul-State, wherein all beings are good and perfect. There is but one law that rules them, the highest law—the law of Love. Beings in that state have the faculties for good *manifest*, while all the faculties for evil are *latent*.

The primary cause of evil is self-will. In perfect beings self-will is latent, and the Divine will is manifest; but in beings where self-will is dominant, the Divine will becomes latent, and those beings descend to a lower state where they are ruled by laws of Thought. Continuing in self-will, man gradually becomes subject to laws of Force.

The law of Love rules the Soul-world. The law of Thought rules the world of Spirit. The law of Force rules the world of Matter. God is equally omnipresent in all three. Viewed from the Absolute, the three are one and identical; but man can only behold God in accordance with the position he takes. On the plane of Matter God is absolute Force; on the plane of Spirit God is absolute Thought; on the Soul-plane God is absolute Love.

Souls can by their free will fall from their high estate. God's will is that all should be good and perfect; man's will is for imperfection only. During the temporal, intermediary, imperfect state there is a struggle between man and God, which ends only when man becomes again irresistibly attracted by the Divine magnet, and remains fixed in the virtues of the Soul-life.

Re-Incarnation is not so much a law as it is a contrivance. By a union with the Divine Soul, which is latent in every man and Spirit, a being may acquire in one state of existence the soul-knowledge that gives the final liberation, and thus be saved many incarnations. For those who deprave the soul there is, however, a long and weary way.

Men believe that in Spirit-life there will at once be an easy access to the Deity; but it is not so, as the same passions that ruled the man rule also the Spirit, and progression is as difficult or as easy to the Spirit as to the physical man. To know God you must become God-like. Knowledge of the true Being is not attained at the physical, but after the Spirit-death. Spirits are still in the imperfect intermediary state. Souls only are perfect beings, and know the One, the Absolute, which is God.

Going unto perfection requires no higher life than this one; man can live consciously in God as well with as without a physical body. The real body is invisible; the sensual casing that stifles the soul, *that is the body which must die before the soul can behold God.*

The soul is of no sex, or rather comprises both the male and female principles; the active, volitional, manifest part forming the male; the passive, involitional, latent life and growth being the female principle, both in man or woman. The female—that is, the involitional—is the Divine principle in man.

Continuity of existence under a variety of forms and phases does not diminish individuality. Even as one is the same individual as child, youth, young man, and aged man, so does the individual being continue, although it may be now a king, now a peasant—now a man, now a woman. A being while a man acts and thinks more, while a woman feels and loves more. Thought and Love are expressions of the one principle that we call Soul, and are comprised in every human being. Sex serves but to modify the expression.

The word "Man" passes through all the tenses and genders in the grammar of existence before it becomes a perfect being or word (*Logos*), and no protestations nor appeals to "correct reasoning, sound theory, experience, or the intuitional or common sense of mankind" will avail to annul that which is.

The physical male and female "elements" (?) are merely temporal adaptations for procreation and have no eternal existence.

As far as the real being is concerned there are many men in female bodies and many women in male bodies.

Each individual soul is a living thought of the Deity. Although all thought has affinity, yet there is an infinite diversity between individuals, and in the entire universe there are not two beings that are in all particulars exactly alike.

The living thought that underlies each soul is the real being of the individual.

Our names are not our being any more than our garments; both are mere accidentals. Neither name, nor nationality, nor creed, nor any human distinction fixes the individuality. It is the living thought that permeates the being, that is the real man.

Let us suppose a being, animated by the loving thought of the Absolute, to be a Liberator. This soul's sole thought is to impart love, truth, and happiness. It is a dire enemy to wrong and evil, and desires only and alone to dispel the darkness and terror of the unreal and to manifest the real, true, and just. This being, in all its various incarnations, will ever keep this object in view. In whatever position it may be born its ruling idea is one and the same, and it is one being throughout, ever identical with itself; for social distinctions are non-existent in real being, and sex is merely an adaptation for the lesser existence. Whether a being appears alternately as woman or as man, as negro or as Esquimaux, as pasha or as pope, as prince or as beggar, has nothing to do with the soul. It is not always in the being's power to assume the character he desires, but generally the ruling idea makes all characters go in one pronounced direction, either for his own progress or for the advancement and happiness of other beings.

Actors assume a greater variety of characters, yet never fear to lose their individuality. Why should man on the world's stage be otherwise?

However, in coming to earth man partly loses consciousness of former states in as far as he has a new organism, and gathers from an aggregation of new visualised impressions a new mind. The memory of the spirit is latent while a new memory is acquired and remains manifest.

The whole series of incarnations that a being has passed through can be known only when in the intermediary state of transition—that is, anterior to the manifestation of the Divine Soul.

The distinctions of nationalities are the inventions of tyrants for the perpetuation of tyranny. All men are equal; the entire human race is one brotherhood. All men are men, no matter what they are called. But a knowledge of this simple truth does not suit the tyrants' wrongful ends; so they give to those they dominate a name in order to exclude the rest of the human race as not of that name, and make it appear as though they who are not of that name were inimical to those who are of that name. Does God or Nature recognise any such man-made distinctions? Is the Englishman born in different wise from the Turk? or does the Jew die because he is a Jew, and does not the Christian perish in the same wise? Are not all subject to the same laws of nature? Yet they will foolishly presume to be better than the rest of humanity when they call themselves by a non-human name.

All religious sects and creeds are but the multiplicity of ignorance, the shame of humanity, and chiefly due to the imposture of priestcraft. Verily as long as a man is proud to call himself something else than a mere man, he is not a man, but something lower. Although he may believe he has improved the work of God, it is not so; he has but depraved it.

Nationality and creed are man-made distinctions. Ancient beings, who have been often incarnate, regard all such man-made distinctions with indifference, for they know that the whole human race is as one man, and that Man-God is the supreme crown of the universe.

Let me ask you a conundrum. What difference is there between an old negress and the Pope? There is the same organism, differing only in the colour of the cuticle and in some unimportant lower organs. There are the same organic functions physically, the same intensely concentrated interest upon the little self mentally, and in each case there is only an old woman. Their designations may differ, but the inner being does not. Although the one may be tiar'd, bedizened, and worshipped, and may be fulminating with anathemas, and the other may be naked and treated with contumely, their inner beings might exchange positions without any one perceiving a difference.

Beings that have been but few times incarnate love to dwell



upon the past, and look back with pleasure upon the little distance they have traversed, which to them appears as a great long way. Those who are more ancient in the eternal consider the past as something that is past and done with. The latter bear the greatest reverses with equanimity bordering upon indifference, while the former are distressed and in greatest anxiety if the least thing goes wrong; for the former live in Time, the latter more in Eternity.

The Hebrew initiate spoke truth when he said: "One day in Eternity equals all Time, and one span of Time is equal to Eternity." Indicating thereby that beings have an alternate existence in Time and Eternity. Time is the maturing of Eternity, and Eternity is timeless Time.

Or would you rather pass Eternity in singing psalms?

Knowledge of former existence is an individually experienced consciousness. What facts are we to give to those who will not recognise it? Although one should rise from the dead to tell them that Re-Incarnation is, yet they will not believe *anything* coming from "control." They believe in nothing but themselves, and in "the eternal truths of + and —," whatever these may be, for we do not pretend to understand them.

Two classes of beings become re-incarnated. Firstly, those who, by perverse use of the senses, have lost sight of the object of their existence and who have to return partly to atone for former misdeeds, but chiefly to rub off, by a right life, the excrescent passions and crooked thoughts they acquired by a former perverse contact with matter and which cleave to them in spirit. The second class are those beings who become the teachers of humanity; these, too, often lose sight of their self-imposed task in a mere desire for dominion.

The world of matter is the school of experience for spirit. Spirits who have not acquired in one incarnation the knowledge requisite for their eternal welfare must return again and again, until they leave their crooked ways and learn to walk in the straight path that leads to God.

Beings advanced in knowledge and love—angels and even souls—return to the worlds of their former existences from pity and sympathy for those who are undergoing the arduous though self-inflicted task for their spiritual progression and final re-integration. These are the "new souls" of the Kabbalists that "come from sun-rising," although they are more ancient than any; even as Christ said, "Before Abraham was, I am." Every great teacher that has appeared on this planet has passed through a succession of incarnations, or he would not have had the sympathy and knowledge which is the consequence of experience, and whereby he was enabled to point out the true way to other less advanced beings. For if souls, beings who are nearest to God and who are *God's* and *Gods*, had not from pure love of God and man come to teach, we should all have perished in *spiritual* darkness.

Individual beings are living thoughts. Each desires to impart himself to others, and according to his plane is his view and thought. When men as a spirit or soul has attained to knowledge and desires to impart it to an incarnate spirit, the latter either repels or does not fully accept it, but retains his own reflections and mixes up truth with error. As the light of truth cannot combine with the darkness of ignorance, higher spirits and even souls—when they find they cannot otherwise impart truth to humanity, and not being desirous to override the incarnate beings by pretending to the tyrannic semi-obsession that the "guides" of the Spiritualists assume, themselves accept incarnation with its sorrow and its glory to accomplish their rightful object. Those who have misdeeds to atone for accomplish by prayer and repentance what higher beings achieve by their knowledge.

Men may protest against the laws of nature; but will it avail? Existence takes no heed of the self-will of man. He who would claim another individual being as his own, how great is his error! God creates all things out of His own being, yet dominates none. What right has man over another being? The Living Thought uses man as a more or less fit instrument for the procreation of beings in its own image; but man has nothing that is his and can claim nothing, for all belongs to God. J. K.

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#### BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

##### Conversazione.

The B. N. A. S. celebrated the thirty-third anniversary of Modern Spiritualism by a conversazione on Thursday evening, March 31st. There was a large attendance, including Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, Mrs. Strawbridge, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond FitzGerald, Dr. and Mrs. Nichols, the Rev. Dr. Davies and the Misses Davies, the Misses Withall, Mr. H. Withall, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson Rogers and Miss Rogers, Mr. Morell Theobald, Mrs. Everett, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. Frank Podmore, Mr. Collingwood, Mr. W. H. Coffin, Madame de Steiger, Mr. C. Pearson, Mrs. Slater, Miss Gay, Mr. R. Pearce and Mrs. Pearce, Miss Houghton, Mr. and Miss Shorter, &c., &c.

A concert of really exceptional merit formed the principal feature of the evening. Miss Katharine Poyntz, Miss Rogers, Mr. E. Tietkens and Mr. Frank Quatremayne, gave their valued assistance as vocalists, while Mr. Augustus L. Tamplin, formerly organist to Rev. H. R. Haweis, at St. James's, Marylebone, acted as accompanist to most of the songs, and also played two solos; one the overture of the evening, Weber's brilliant "Invitation à la Valse," and the other a pair of Chopin's Impromptus. Miss Katharine Poyntz was in splendid voice, singing "Oiseaux légers" and two other songs in the most finished style. The special line of this fair artiste is in oratorio, but she also excels in such a simple ditty as the last on her list of songs "I'm a poor shepherd maid." The silvery sweetness of the shakes introduced into this song won frequent plaudits from the audience. Miss Rogers sang Pierson's "Who is Sylvia?" with much success, though suffering from evident nervousness. Mr. Tietkens is always good alike. Suffice it to say he was himself in Hatton's "Stars of the Summer Night," and Blumenthal's "My Queen," two old favourites in which Spiritualists have often had to applaud the artistic efforts of Mr. Tietkens. Mr. Frank Quatremayne is a new acquaintance; but he ingratiated himself at once with his audience as much by his pleasant *bonhomie* as by his unquestioned musical talents and fine voice. He sang a recitative and air by Verdi and Handel's "Honour and Arms," the latter being well calculated to display the force of his splendid baritone voice. We should not omit to add that Miss H. Withall by special request accompanied Mr. Tietkens in his second song. The whole performance was brought to a close by Mozart's "La ci darem," sung with their wonted ability by Miss Katharine Poyntz and Mr. Frank Quatremayne.

#### RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I do not think that one out of every hundred persons who are called "Spiritualists," believe in the repulsive and unnatural doctrine of "Re-Incarnation." It may be, and I believe is, taught by degraded Spirits. But it is not new knowledge that evil influences are permitted to do evil work; neither is it beyond credit, by Christians at all events, that the missionaries of Satan are very busy trying to counteract the influence of Angels of Light. I trust you will exert yourself to remove an impression that Re-Incarnation forms any part of Spiritualism, or that Spiritualists are in any way responsible for opinions which the large majority of them reject with horror, which William Howitt terms a "loathsome dogma," and which must be rejected by all Christians as an abomination.

Very truly yours,

S. C. HALL.

#### A POINT OF LAW.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I do not wish, intentionally or otherwise, to violate the laws. Will any legal authority amongst our Spiritualist friends advise me how to act in this matter? I am a "sensitive," and as such I receive communications from Spirit friends, who, along with their contributions, give their names. These contributions I am desirous of publishing. Can I publish them, with the names appended, without running the risk of a legal prosecution? Would the use of such names be considered a criminal act, and render me indictable to a charge, if so preferred, of obtaining money—through the sale of such productions—by false pretences? Such information is greatly desired by myself, and it would, no doubt, be useful to others.

Yours faithfully,

"A SENSITIVE."

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their séances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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\*.\* Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to EDWARD T. BERNETT, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained of E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, and of all Booksellers.

## NOTICE.

In consequence of Good Friday occurring next week "Light" will be delivered to the publisher on Wednesday afternoon, so that it may reach our readers on the Thursday.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

At the Fortnightly Discussion Meeting of the British National Association on Monday evening last, Madame de Steiger read an excellent paper on "Art and the Supernatural." We hope to be able to publish it in our next issue.

Intelligent Spiritualists are always interested in knowing what Swedenborg has to say on any subject which concerns—however remotely—the relations between the physical and the spiritual; and we need offer no apology, therefore, for mentioning the fact that it has been proposed to publish, by subscription, a translation of Swedenborg's "Treatise on the Brain." The translation has been made by Dr. Tafel, and in order to contribute to the correctness and scientific precision of the work, Dr. J. J. Garth Wilkinson, the learned translator and editor of a number of Swedenborg's philosophical works—and whose name is well-known to some of the older Spiritualists—has consented to assist Dr. Tafel in seeing it through the press. It is confidently stated in reference to this work of the great Swedish philosopher that it contains the first complete theory of the brain and of the nervous system that has ever been set forth; that every organ and every particle composing it are there presented "in their true light," and have their functions and uses assigned to them; and that the author shews the relations which they bear to the soul on the one hand and to the body on the other. Those who make these very bold assertions may be perhaps a little too enthusiastic in their admiration of the great master—whom they almost idolise; but there can hardly be a doubt that the translation will be a work of inestimable value.

The editor of the *Truth Seeker* is an honest and fearless man. He has his convictions in regard to Spiritualism, and he is never afraid to express them openly. In this respect he sets a noble example which other editors might imitate with advantage; if not to their worldly profit, yet certainly to the easement of their consciences—if they have any. We know editors who believe in the facts of Spiritualism, but who do not dare to give a hint of the truth to their readers. We know ministers of religion who believe in the facts of Spiritualism but who do not dare to give a hint of the truth to their hearers. Such men, of course, are moral cowards, and Spiritualists have very little to thank them for. Mr. J. Page Hopps is an editor and a minister—and no coward. Reviewing Epes Sargent's "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," he candidly says:—"The book is not a book of splendid theories; it is pre-eminently a book of facts, evidently the results of prolonged, patient and truth-loving search; and while we have no hesitation in commending it to teachable and enquiring minds, we fully endorse its author's statement, that 'the time has gone by when the facts of this volume could be dismissed as coincidences, delusions, or frauds.'"

Dr. Maurice Davies writes to us that he is still open to receive names of those who hold Spiritualism to be compatible with Christianity, in order to submit them privately to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The names will not be published in any way, nor do the senders commit themselves to all or any of the statements in Dr. Davies's letter beyond the general expression of compatibility between the two systems aforesaid. It

would be most desirable that Spiritualists should help him to make this list a representative, even if not an exhaustive one. Dr. Davies has also formally asked leave from the Bishop of Durham to speak at the forthcoming Church Congress in opposition to the paper which regards Spiritualism as a "deviation" from Christianity and classes it with Infidelity and Secularism. It will be observed that the very title of the paper begs the whole question at issue. The names of those who are prepared to endorse the compatibility of Spiritualism with Christianity may be sent under cover to the editor of "LIGHT" or directly to Dr. Davies himself.

In answer to our inquiries, Dr. Maurice Davies informs us that he has received communications from both the Archbishops on the subject of the letter addressed by him to the Primate. The Archbishop of Canterbury has left for the Continent; but his chaplain writes to Dr. Davies, saying that his Grace took the letter with him to read during his peregrinations. The Archbishop of York wrote at once acknowledging the receipt of the printed copy sent to him by Dr. Davies in pamphlet form. The Archbishop says:—

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I fear I do not know so much about Spiritualism as I should need to know before pronouncing that it was or was not contrary to Christianity. The difficulty for one in my position is to get at such facts as there are, freed from the admixture of fraud and imposition which has tainted many of the supposed manifestations. I should be willing to consider any such evidence if I could get it. It has certainly struck me, in the cases that I have seen reported, that the trivial and aimless nature of the supposed revelations went far to induce the belief that they had no higher origin than the excited nerves of somewhat weak people. But the question is one of evidence; and those who ask us to believe in Spiritualism have laid on them the onus of proof. But I do not say that they can prove nothing. I do not know enough about the subject.—I am, rev. Sir, yours very truly,

"W. EBOR."

Nothing could be more candid or reasonable than this letter, differing, as it does, entirely from the prejudiced opinions expressed by the generality of clerical critics. Dr. Davies has, in reply, offered certain evidence and also repeated his wish to speak at the coming Church Congress, in which Spiritualism is to be treated, along with Infidelity and Secularism, as a "deviation from Christianity," thus prejudging the question at issue. Such an offer can scarcely be declined if the matter is to be fairly dealt with.

## CURIOUS MESMERIC PHENOMENA.

By S. B. Sexton, Esq., F.T.S.

In the course of recent studies, I tried the following mesmeric experiment. I put my sensitive, a young lady of about 18, into the mesmeric state, and told her to go to a Masonic Lodge that I knew met that evening, and describe to me what took place. After lying unconscious for about an hour and a half, to all appearance without life, except for a very slight breathing, she said, "I am back;" and after telling me that the first person she encountered was a man with a drawn sword in his hand, who, of course, was the Tyler, she went on and described the ceremony of the third degree, the candidate and the inmates of the Lodge, giving me his, and several of their names. All these particulars I inquired into the next day, and found they were correct in every particular. I had also a curious experience with a Chicago medium—a Mrs. R. H. Simpson. I asked "Skiwauke," the controlling spirit, or whatever it was that professed to be the spirit of an Indian, if he could bring me a lock of hair from a mesmeric sensitive of mine. He said, "We will try; you must will your sensitive to sleep." He then asked for an empty envelope, told me to put the envelope between two closed book-slates, put the slates on top of the table, lay my hands on one end, and have the medium lay hers on the other. We did so, and after waiting for about five minutes, there came the sounds of three raps. We took the slates apart, opened the envelope, and inside was a lock of hair, of the colour of that of the sensitive mentioned above. It had the appearance of having been burnt from the head. The next day I received a letter from my sensitive saying "Why did you will me to sleep? When I awoke, my head felt as if it had had a hot iron passed through it." With this same medium I have had writing come inside closed slates. In one instance a live snake was brought by the invisible agent; in another a live fish. For physical manifestations she is one of the best I have ever met, and she submits to any test you may propose.—*The Theosophist.*



## OBJECTIONS TO RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I wish to be allowed to make a few remarks on the article by your correspondent "G. W., M.D.," entitled "Objections to Re-Incarnation," which appeared in your issue of March 26th.

Your correspondent refers to "certain vague and mysterious sensations as of a previous long-forgotten existence" as the origin of the existing belief in Re-Incarnation. I wish to observe that the doctrine does not rest on any such foundation. I by no means deny the possibility that such impressions may sometimes be accounted for by clairvoyance, but at the best this is only bringing one supposition to combat another.

Your correspondent also refers to the opinion of Swedenborg as "worthy of much acceptance." This may be so, but at the same time it must be remembered that it is only an opinion. Swedenborg was an impressional medium, and as a seer recorded his experience of spiritual things. But there are many, both in times past and in the present, who likewise are able to give spiritual experiences which do not always coincide with those of the great seer. It cannot be proved that either the one or the other is more worthy of credence. But the fact that "Swedenborg met and conversed with nearly all his deceased acquaintances in the land of Spirits, and the Spirits of many historic characters in their proper personalities," is no proof against Re-Incarnation.

I think that "G. W., M.D.," fails to perceive that Time has only an earthly significance, and that so far from being of any account in spiritual experience, the whole of existence past, present, and future is but as one from a spiritual standpoint. Prevision proves this. The seer sees events of the past and future as taking place at the present moment. Re-Incarnation does not necessitate immediate return to earth; on the contrary, if Spirit teaching is to be taken in reference to this subject it would seem that long periods may elapse between the incarnations.

I fail to see what connection the allegory of Agar, as given by St. Paul, should have with the direct assertion by Jesus that John the Baptist was Elias. But the quotations from the Bible were given principally to shew that a belief in plurality of existences was prevalent among the Jews. The varied interpretations of the teachings of Jesus render it difficult to decide whether this remark about Elias was "analogical" or not.

"G. W., M.D.," infers that the reply of Jesus to the penitent thief is another argument against Re-Incarnation. Now whatever interpretation is to be given to the word Paradise—whether by it is meant a final state of happiness, a state for the full enjoyment of which the penitent thief was prepared by a simple acknowledgment of a belief in Christ, after a life which, as "G. W., M.D.," remarks, "was probably one series of errors and miseries," or whether this word refers to a progressive spiritual condition—may well be considered open to inquiry; and it is also open to inquiry whether Spirits *have*, as your correspondent asserts, "the option of going on unto perfection in a higher life," or of coming "back into time, there to suffer and again perish." It *can* well be conceivable that Spirits out of the flesh may, like Spirits in the flesh, be willing to adopt any course that is likely to prove for their ultimate progression.

Your correspondent speaks of a "simple and pure infant," and of the "frightful injustice" done to such by the incarnation of an undeveloped Spirit. The organism previous to incarnation, whenever that may take place, whether at birth or previously, may be negatively free from impurity; it is but matter with its physically inherited development. But "G. W., M.D.," can hardly make us believe that the physically inherited organisation of his child would be suitable for the next incarnation of the "rascally thief."

With respect to "G. W., M.D.'s" suppositious case of incarnation, he seems to forget that development is usually obtained by a *progressive* series of experiences, and "Potiphar's wife" and "Aaron" seem to have but little in common.

As to the manifestations of identity, as displayed in the persons of the audience at a Monday evening's lecture at the British National Association of Spiritualists, we certainly feel that we do behold "Mrs. Desmond Fitzgerald, Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, Mrs. Hallock, Mr. Podmore, Mr. Tapp, Mrs. Woodeforde, Madame de Steiger, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Shorter, and Mr. Tebb"; and we are not under any delusion; for the manifestation of each personality is the result of the spiritual development of previous incarnations, which does not obliterate present personality.

I should like also to remark to "G. W., M.D.," that we Spiritualists *above all* should remember that ridicule is not argument. There may be difficulties in this as in most theories, but it would be wiser and more worthy of seekers after truth to suspend judgment while giving an earnest and *serious* attention to doctrines that many thoughtful minds in the past, and certainly very many in the present day, who claim to have "common sense," consider entitled to belief.

As to whether Re-Incarnation is or is not regardless of sex, this is not an essential point, nor does the *assumed* opinion that most Re-Incarnationists negative the idea that they have still other re-Incarnations to undergo, affect the truth. But the conclusion that the "French Spirits" (and unnumbered others) are "amusing themselves by reflecting the delusions of the Re-Incarnationists," while those Spirits who witness on the other side are to be believed and considered as confirming the opposite opinion, is, to say the least, an assertion somewhat one-sided and unfair.

F. ARUNDALE.

6, Pelham-place, Hastings  
March 28th, 1881.

SIR,—Since I sent you my reply to "G. W., M.D.," I have read the two letters which appeared in your issue of April 2nd, and shall be glad if you can find me space in your journal for a few additional remarks.

Your correspondent "S. C." argues that sex is in the spirit. I cannot agree with that proposition; but that there is in spirit a duality inherent in its nature, a positive and a negative principle, which combined form the perfect spirit, I think can be easily understood. It is, as "S. C." remarks, "according to the analogy of all nature;" but that the separate manifestations of this duality of essence or spirit should always be in accordance with the physical body does not, to me, appear necessary. The contrast between the physical organisation and the character of the individual is sometimes very marked, the spirit, in spite of its habitation for the time being, shewing clearly its distinctive character. Sex does cease when the physical body is put off, but the individuality of spiritual nature does not. To all eternity duality will exist, although, may be, blended in perpetual marriage in the perfect spirit.

That those who communicate with us should come as men and women is most natural, for they return according to their earth identities; but Spirits have returned in the personalities of more than one existence. I am perfectly aware that in many instances Spirits amuse themselves at our expense, but this will apply to all Spirits, whether those in favour of Re-Incarnation or not.

The statement that Pythagoras distinctly remembered being a frog does not in any way touch this question. A doctrine is not responsible for the eccentricities of its adherents; but I think even Pythagoras, if rightly understood, would be found not to have anticipated the re-appearance of a man in a frog.

Your other correspondent, "D. J.," speaks of the inequality existing in the world and the fact that the argument of Re-Incarnation does not abolish it. It certainly does not, it only gives the grounds on which to account for it. All Spirits cannot be equally advanced in progress, their individualisation commencing at different periods.

There is no injustice in giving the prize to the winner of an athletic contest, or to the most proficient at a mathematical examination, for the awarder does not impose more stringent conditions or more difficult problems on one candidate than on another; but in the race for the prize of eternal progress, if some beings are weighted with a load of evil and spiritual incapacity, while others are endowed with spiritual gifts to aid their advance, *this* would be injustice and incompatible with our ideas of a just Divinity.

I do, however, most heartily agree with the sentiment of the concluding paragraph of "D. J.'s" letter. If our watchword is progress, if we bear in mind that our actions here in the present are the seed of which we must reap the fruit in a future state of being, it will matter but little whether we accept the doctrine of Re-Incarnation or not.

F. ARUNDALE.

6, Pelham-place, Hastings.  
April 2nd, 1881.

[The discussion on the Doctrine of Re-Incarnation must now be closed for the present.—ED. "LIGHT."]

## SERJEANT COX'S "MECHANISM OF MAN."

*Address delivered by Mr. Frank Podmore, B. A. (Oxon), before the British National Association of Spiritualists, Monday, March 21st.*

(Continued from page 99.)

For what is really the meaning of the word materialism? It is an epithet much bandied about, and is attached to men holding very different views of the universe, and its meaning is so much obscured by popular prejudice and theological rancour, as to make it very hard accurately to define, if, indeed, not knowing what matter is, an accurate definition is possible. But, generally speaking, the Materialist is one who believes that the appearances of this present world, together with all lawful inferences and deductions from them, and all rational enlargements of them, make up the sum total of all that is, or can be. The essential tenet of the Materialist is just this: he believes that the knowledge which he has gained of the visible universe is not only real knowledge, but is, in itself, the measure of all other attainable knowledge. He believes, in especial, that man is simply a part of the mechanical universe. He is a machine of infinitely subtle construction—by happy aid of natural selection—but a machine, nevertheless; and to be moved by anyone who can rightly finger the keys. Thinking is simply the function of certain tissues, called cerebral, as digestion is the function of certain other tissues, called mucous membrane of the stomach. Consciousness is an occasional concomitant of thought. Thinking—that is, functioning of the cerebral tissues aforesaid—goes on just the same, whether consciously or not. But sometimes, when the action is more violent, perhaps, the tissues take fire, as it were, and there is an illumination of what we call Will or Consciousness. The chemical formula for the reaction is the same in both cases, and the mechanical result the same; so that this will-o'-the-wisp light of consciousness is, at least, harmless, and need not be taken into serious account. The man, in fact, is a mere complex and delicately-adjusted Babbage calculating machine, in which, on occasion, some finer and more rapidly-revolving wheels and springs become phosphorescent—but, happily, without lessening their capacity for work. Thus far the Materialist.

But, you will say, Mr. Cox's views are not similar to these at all. For he does not believe only in what we see, he is eloquent on a new invisible body—on new senses, new forces, and the rest of it. True; but his new body is but a new edition of the old; mapped out like it into legs and arms, and molecules and nerve-system. His new senses are only the old familiar sight and hearing and touch, enlarged so as to take note of extra-retinal or super-auditory vibrations; the medium is the same; the manner of the perception is the same; and, for aught there appears to the contrary, the things perceived differ only by the fact of their difference. His new forces are now new forms of magnetic attraction, now extensions of "nerve force," or "vital force," as he is pleased to call it, and ray out from the finger-ends, or are deviated from the ordinary nerve-channels to flow beyond the body. He measures all things by the standard of what he has seen, or heard, or can imagine. That there should be a spiritual substance which has no form; a sense which sees nothing external at all, but recognises all things as being reflections of itself; and that for a "psychic force" there should be only Faith, which, as has been well said, "can clutch at a thought and close its grasp on a fact"—such things as these do not enter into his scheme at all. To him they are inconceivable, and therefore cannot be: for a soul made of nothing would be nothing; a mind perceiving only itself would perceive nothing; a will working by will alone would be powerless. And so any fact of which he cannot represent to himself the mode of production by known and familiar analogies, he passes by altogether. Even amongst the phenomena of Spiritualism there are many, such as materialised flowers, heads and limbs; pens guided by luminous hands; messages written in closed slates, which no hocus-pocus of psychic power will altogether comfortably explain; and of these it is notorious that his book takes no notice. Prophetic dreams and predictions, too, will by no means fit in with his conceptions of space and time as the medium and place wherein immortal souls exist. That a Spirit should be, and yet be nowhere and at no moment of time, he could by no means admit. Time remains to him an unalterable and self-existent reality. He does indeed shew, at the latter part of his book, how, if we only had telescopes powerful enough, the past ages of our planet, to the extent of some few thousand years or so, might become actually present to us. But, alas! astronomy and telescopes will only do what the pen and paper of the historian can do for this earth; they cannot make the future present as well as the past. And so, in reluctantly treating of predictions and warning dreams, he makes an ineffectual attempt, by means of coincidence worn threadbare, to explain away all the recorded instances of such, seeing that explanation of them he has none to offer.

Now is not this Materialism, and that of the grossest kind? For after all Materialism does not consist in what a man believes, but in the manner of his believing of it. A man is a Materialist, you say, who believes in matter only: is he the less a Materialist if he believes in matter plus ether? The question for us to ask

is, *how* does he believe it? Does he believe that his understanding and his experience are to be the measure of the immeasurable universe? that what he can touch, or see, or feel with these senses, or fifty others like them, *that alone* is; that what with this body or a score of other bodies, one within the other, like the ivory balls in a Chinese puzzle, he can do or imagine, is the limit of what the spirit of man and the Spirit of God can do? Does he think that by correlating the mind and the soul of man with etherial, instead of with grossly material particles, and by talking of an immortality which he has not proved and cannot prove, and of a God, when he does not even understand what others mean or hope by that word, he can refute Materialism? Does he fail to admit, beyond all material refinements and possibilities whatsoever, something which we may call Soul, or Spirit, the Absolute, or Being with a capital B, which is not to be measured in term of matter, or compared with anything which we know at all, but is quite incomparable and incommensurable with such? If he does think this, and does fail to admit the other, then he is a Materialist. He is standing with his back to the sun, and believes that he sees the universe, when he sees but the shadow of himself projected on the infinite void. And he is a Materialist all the more, because he does not realise his own position. We have some new living who are called Materialists; Haeckel, no doubt, would be said to be such. But at least he is aware that his views are at variance with those of the Spiritualists. He has never, that I have heard of, come forward as the champion of distressed orthodoxy, the saviour of religion from the foes that threaten to overwhelm her.

Finally, that we may rightly appreciate what this view of the cosmos which we have now been examining, is, let us contrast it with that which it is *not*. The conviction of the Theologian, of the Platonic Idealist, of, in a word, the Spiritualist, using that term now in its general and unrestricted sense—is, I take it, something like this. They believe that all which we can now see, and hear, and touch, is but the passing representation and symbolism to our dull understanding of something which we can by no means touch, hear, or see. And this palpable universe, with all that is in it, which is born, and grows old and dies; which is evolved, and compounded, and reverts again to its elements; with all its changes, and developments, and corruptions; with its imperfect means to unfulfilled ends, and fragmentary parts of unaccomplished wholes; with all its shifting phantasmagories and unrealities—is but the reflection, they say, of something perfect, incorruptible, and immutable. They think that outside of all nebular vortices, and cosmic evolutions, and geological progressions, and beyond the dance of the suns, and behind the cycles of time, and the generations of men, there lies something of which, as not being in space, we cannot say that it has parts, or dimensions, or form, nor that it is here, or is there; of which, as not being in time, we cannot say that it endures, nor that it has beginning of days, nor end of existence; but which remains, to our partial apprehension, an indissoluble, indiscernible, and imperishable unity. And, in especial, in this poor humanity of ours, with its will that waits on circumstance, and its intelligence that sees only through the half-open, half-obscure windows of the senses; that, for the imperfection of its understanding, looks through the prism of time, and views its world in the triple kaleidoscopic mirror of space; here is the meeting place of what seems, and what is; here we find the reflection of unity into difference; the imperishable one split up into the perishing many; the divers coloured spectrum of the Light, absolute and indivisible, which lies behind. And this Ineffable, of which we can predicate only the negations of difference, and corruption, and mutability, is what we call Spirit.

Two things here may seem to call for explanation and apology on my part. The first: that I have singled out for hostile criticism a published work within a few months of the death of its author, when there is no longer from him any possibility of reply. The second: that I have thought it necessary to criticise the work at all, seeing that it was written some six or seven years ago, and may now be thought to have played its part. As regards the first, I can only plead in defence that the time was not of my choosing, for I have but within the last few weeks read "The Mechanism of Man," and I heartily wish its author were here in bodily presence to-night to reply to me. For the second, I had still less choice in the matter. The views here examined are those held, in whole or in part, by many who call themselves Spiritualists. They permeate in a more or less disguised form the greater part of Spiritualistic literature; and they constitute to the outer world the distinguishing feature of the Spiritualist philosophy. Their predominance is to be deplored only because it is an exclusive predominance; not because the explanation offered of the human mechanism is necessarily an unsound one, but because it is left to be inferred, or at all events because it actually is inferred by many, that this explanation leaves nothing, in Heaven or on earth, to be explained. In the now defunct—or shall I say, re-incarnated?—"Spiritual Notes," I ventured to make a few remarks to substantially the same effect as my paper to-night, on certain similar views expressed half unconsciously by the author of "Theosophy and the Higher Life." But the author of that work is neither so consistent in his views, nor expounds them with such fulness of detail and explication as Mr. Cox has done. Nor have I elsewhere met with any similar theory so elaborately



explained. On that point Mr. Cox leaves us nothing to be desired. We need have no doubt as to his meaning; no hesitation because one passage fails to accord with another. From first to last the views expressed in "The Mechanism of Man" are, in all essential points, entirely consistent. Dryden says of a poetical predecessor—

"Others to some faint meaning make pretence,  
But Shadwell never deviates into sense."

*Mutatis mutandis*, I would say the same of Mr. Cox, so far, at least, as this book gives expression to his beliefs. Others amongst Spiritualists, who hold similar views, may be materialistic, but they ever and anon rise to a higher level—flights which prove their possession of clearer intuitions, if they impair the logical symmetry of their theories. But Serjeant Cox's course is uniform and unbroken; it is all of the earth, earthy. Two generations ago Hegel taunted the English with being the only nation in Europe who spoke of the construction of a kitchen stove as a subject of philosophical inquiry. It has been reserved for Mr. Cox to class the movements of tables and chairs, and the levitations of Mr. Home, amongst mental phenomena—to give us a new body, and a new anatomy of it, and to call the first a Spirit and the other Psychology.

## OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

### "The Spiritualist."

The apparitions at Llanthony Abbey—the monastery of Father Ignatius—form the subject of a leading article in our contemporary; and the writer suggests that from the nature of the lives led by the monks and acolytes at the monastery, the conditions needful for the development of the phenomenon of clairvoyance were established, so that the "inference is that no Spirits were objectively there, but that they were seen by the spiritual eyesight of clairvoyant mediums." A very full account of the spiritual experiences at Llanthony Abbey is given in the *Visitors' Register*, of Bournemouth, with which our contemporary closes its article.

Those interested in the discussion on the Kabbalah will feel indebted to Dr. Carter Blake for publishing a list of what he calls "a few good books" which he has seen on the subject, and which will repay perusal. The subject is still further dealt with in an article by "M.D.," who, answering the question, Who were the Kabbalists? remarks, "Certainly not Hebrews—for the Hebrew Kabbalists claimed in the name 'Kabbalah,' which they gave their science, that it was 'received,' and therefore not Hebrew in its origin." It is further contended that the Kabbalists were more ancient than the authors and interpreters of the Hebrew Scriptures, since theirs was a venerable science when it reached the hands of those distinguished personages.

"Verax," in a letter upon "Astrology and the Czar's Death," quotes the "predictions" of "Raphael" and "Zadkiel;" the first of the two "prophets" stating that he judged it beyond doubt that, in spite of plots and machinations, the Czar would die a natural death; while the second oracle enumerated February, March, May, and July as all being dangerous months!

### "The Medium."

An article upon "Bible Spiritualism," treating specially on "Body conditions of Bible mediums," offers some interesting suggestions. From the writer's point of view, a *resumé* of the confusion which exists in the ranks of Spiritualism leads him to conclude that the "bewilderment and muddle" that now prevail are due to the fact that the method of investigation has been faulty. The writer, "Ouranoi," claims that every Bible medium approved himself to his age, as inspired with a higher life, and by that energised his race. It is urged that circles should be composed of men and women chiefly characterised by the finer elements of animal life, as against those who have mere animalism of structure. Speaking upon the question of diet, the writer says that the finest physique of the human race, to-day, is possessed by vegetarian races.

The action of the National Secular Society in expelling Mr. J. Holmes, of Leicester, from its membership, and a similar action on the part of the Methodists of Plymouth, regarding Mr. C. Ware, a minister of that denomination, are vigorously discussed. Our contemporary, speaking of the two bodies, says: "One group of facts and indicated relations, called Spiritualism, is equally condemned by both, and not only that but those who dare to investigate them, or acknowledge the truth of recognised facts, are punished!"

Our contemporary announces that it has now entered upon the eleventh year of its existence. Miss Caroline Corner has a pretty little poem in the number from which we are quoting, entitled "In the Sunbeams;" and we observe also a statement that a meeting-room for Spiritualists is to be opened at East Dulwich, at the house of Mrs. Jones, Beaumont, Crystal Palace-road.

### "The Herald of Progress."

The readers of this journal are to be favoured by a series of articles, contributed by "The Cornish Exile" upon "Pliny the Younger: his Letters." The "Exile," who aims at adducing

corroborative experiences from the past of the Spiritual phenomena transpiring in the present, writes:—

"I shall do little other than call upon the ancients to shew a light to lighten the modern Christian and the Materialist into the paths of peace and happiness. If I fail to add to their stock of knowledge, and should falter in my attempt to touch their feelings, I shall console myself with the reflection that I have meant to do good. The most that we know about the teachings and practices of primitive Christians we glean from the Gospels supposed to have been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and the epistles of Paul and James and others; but in addition to these writings, there are other sources of information open to our inspection, and to one of these I am about to refer. I call upon Pliny, a Pagan scholar, to convert the modern Christian from the error of his ways, and arouse in his mind a respect for such superhuman phenomena as alone established and maintained Christianity in primitive times."

A Rev. Mr. W. Mole has lately been denouncing Spiritualism as devilish, witchcraft, sorcery, and an offence against the Most High, his deliverance being made at a colliery village close to Newcastle-on-Tyne. Commenting on them, the leading article in the *Herald* says rightly:—

"Spiritualism is not witchcraft. A witch, according to the ordinary acceptance of the term, is a woman who employs spirits to aid her in carrying out some malignant designs of her own. Spiritualism is not sorcery. There are neither incantations nor enchantments employed at spiritual séances. Spiritualism is not divination. It is no more diabolical to speak with our friends after the change of death than before it. Spiritualism is the religion of motives of goodness, of self-sacrifice, and practical goodness. As such it will bear the reproaches of the bigot and the denunciations of the ignorant, whether in pulpit, press, or in the common walks of life."

An excellent controversial letter appears from the pen of Mrs. E. L. T. Nosworthy, on behalf of a reverent and spiritual recognition of Jesus in our literature and lectures. The writer says that there is not any speaker of note who denies or opposes the opinions of Jesus, as expressed by Drs. Peebles and Crowell, M.A. (Oxon), and others.

### "The Banner of Light."

"The Phenomena on Official Record" is the subject of a leader in the issue of the 19th ult. Referring to the fact that the fifth report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston contains historical documents of general interest, special mention is made of a series of articles taken from the *Daily Transcript*, of Boston, contributed to that journal in 1855, and containing references to Mr. Robert G. Shaw, one of the most eminent of Boston's later merchant princes. Mr. Shaw's experiences were to him startling, and convinced him that he held communication with his departed relatives and friends, and as the record containing the reference is an official one, posterity will be able to read that a shrewd man of business was open to conviction upon the phenomena of Spiritualism, and, when convinced, was not ashamed or afraid to make the avowal. Mr. N. J. Bowditch, who contributed the articles to the *Transcript*, was not himself quite satisfied that the results of his own experiments were produced by spiritual agencies.

Mrs. Richmond continues her ministrations in Chicago in a way which seems to give the greatest satisfaction, and lately one of her controls, "Ouina," painted, for presentation to the Ladies' Union, a pretty symbolical picture, which was duly received at the anniversary of that body.

The American Spiritualist Alliance is the name of the last organisation formed in America, concerning which the *Banner* pertinently says:—

"Time alone must demonstrate its influence and destiny; we feel to trust this new venture, as all others connected with the modern dispensation, to the shaping hand of the invisible intelligences, who have thus far shaped and guided the movement, which the Spirit world—not man—inaugurated 33 years ago."

Dr. J. V. Mansfield is rapidly recovering from his late indisposition. Giles B. Stebbins has a readable article headed "An Hour with Herbert Spencer." Dr. Slade is to be in Boston for some little time. A biographical sketch of Mr. William Eglinton is given, extending over seven columns, with portrait; closing with reports of some recent séances held in Boston, to which reference was made in the number of "LIGHT" issued last week. Reports of Mr. J. W. Colville's lectures and receptions shew that the interest in them is as well maintained as ever.

### "The Religio Philosophical Journal"

The last number of this journal that comes to hand contains a report of an address delivered before the New York Conference of Spiritualists by Mr. P. E. Farnsworth, who, dealing with a much debated topic, says:—

"But there are certain 'trance' speakers, so-called, who have done much, in my estimation, to make the subject unpopular, by claiming that distinguished spirits speak through their organism. They may be perfectly honest and sincere in

their belief, but so far from being able to give any proof of what is asserted the evidence is usually all against it. A clear understanding of the extent to which one mind can control another in the form may have an important bearing on the subject."

Writing on the subject of "The Fourth Dimension of Space," Hudson Tuttle, one of America's best and most cautious speakers and writers upon Spiritualism, states:—

"It is exceedingly unfortunate that through the theorising of Professors Zöllner and Crookes, the hypothesis of a 'fourth dimension' of space has become, as it were, attached to Spiritualism. It is claimed that this fourth dimension explains the passage of matter through matter. Of the passage of matter through matter, or of tying knots in an endless cord, I have nothing to say, more than this, that they are by no means sufficiently well-proven to require an hypothesis for their explanation. But granting such to be facts, they by no means prove the fourth dimension of space more than that the earth is a hexagon."

#### GOSWELL HALL.

##### Anniversary Celebration.

On Thursday evening, the 31st ult., the thirty-third anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was celebrated at Goswell Hall by a concert and ball, organised by the committee of the Goswell-road Sunday Services, and presided over by Mr. N. J. Greenwell, who made a neat and appropriate introductory address. A selection of instrumental and vocal music was given by the following ladies and gentlemen: The Misses Gillam, M. A. Sparey, Katie Gautier, Florence Hassell, Coffin, M. A. Keeves, and Messrs. Louis Freeman, W. Paul, Ming, Frederick Grey, A. E. Hunter (Cambor), and T. Pressley. The large audience testified their pleasure as the various items of the programme were presented, and enthusiastically responded to the vote of thanks proposed to the artistes by Mr. W. Towns, and seconded by Mr. Wortley. The floor was shortly afterwards cleared for dancing, in which the company heartily engaged, and upon separating at 12 o'clock expressed the feeling that the soirée was not only the largest, but the best ever held in the Hall. The Sunday services in Goswell Hall are meeting the wants of the numerous Spiritualists residing in the northern and eastern districts, and the managers are deserving of every encouragement in their efforts to maintain free and open meetings. The Sunday morning conferences are exceedingly interesting, and the evening services are attended by speakers of ability. Mr. W. Towns is the hon. sec., and his address will be found in our list of London meetings.

##### Sunday Services.

On Sunday last Miss Keeves delivered an inspirational address before a numerous audience, her subject being an argument based on the question of regeneration, which she treated in a manner that was pronounced highly satisfactory, as were also the answers to questions which she gave at the close of her address.

#### LADBROKE HALL.

On Sunday evening last the regular address here was delivered by Miss Samuels, who discoursed upon "Man, natural and spiritual," to a very large congregation. At the close of the lecture Mr. F. O. Matthews gave clairvoyant tests which were recognised not only by Spiritualists, but by several others to whom the "tests" were addressed.

#### STEINWAY HALL.

The thirty-third anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was celebrated in this hall on Monday evening last by a public meeting. Dr. T. L. Nichols presided, and delivered the address of the evening. Mr. Tietkens and Mr. Cölmán respectively rendered vocal and instrumental assistance, and Mr. J. J. Morse, whose presence was received with marked approval, made a brief but very suitable address which elicited much applause. The meeting, though small, was characterised by much heartiness and good feeling.

#### BIRMINGHAM.

Our old and esteemed friend Mr. J. J. Morse placed his services at our disposal on Sunday last, when he delivered two addresses in the Oozel-street Board Schools, the subjects, at our request, being "Starved Souls" and "Does Death End All?" Of these addresses we had heard enough said in other quarters to cause us to desire their repetition here. The morning lecture was well-received by a deeply-interested audience. The evening's discourse attracted a very large congregation, the lecture being considered one of the best we have had, awakening as it did some of the old enthusiasm in this town. The friends hope Mr. Morse will consent to visit them again before long.—A. J. SMYTH.

#### CARDIFF.

At the weekly meeting of this Society, on Sunday, April 3rd, the hon. sec. read a paper on Re-Incarnation. He shewed the difference between this doctrine and that of metempsychosis as taught by the ancient philosophers. The basis of Re-Incarnation was the infinite perfection of infinite intelligence; its object

was, while waiting for more light, to banish the idea of disorder, by opening the gates of time beyond our birth, as we have banished the idea of injustice by opening other gates beyond the tomb. He believed that the progressive evolution of matter was but the manifestation of the progress of spirit through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms up to and through man to higher conditions, in the order displayed to our view by the Book of Nature. He disagreed with some thinkers with respect to the supposed necessity for the re-incarnation of a spirit in both sexes successively. Several questions were afterwards put by the audience and answered by the lecturer. Mr. E. Adams occupied the chair.

#### DARLINGTON.

Last week's progress in our work was especially marked by the celebration of the thirty-third anniversary of Modern Spiritualism, in the form of a social concert and fruit banquet. Mr. J. Hodge kindly consented to take the chair, and our juvenile choir afforded satisfaction to all present by their singing. Miss Hall kindly presented the fruit for the banquet, and Mrs. Scott conducted the general arrangements. On the next evening a materialisation séance was given by our local medium, J. Archer, to a promiscuous circle, which concluded by the medium being brought out in our midst, the Spirit-form being visible to all, independent of the medium, who was in a deep trance.—ALFRED C. CLARK.

#### PENRYN.

Writing in the *Cornubian*, "Drus" records his experiences upon attending an anti-Spiritualist lecture given in this town. He says: "Sometimes there is much in a name. For instance: It was announced that the Rev. J. Douglas, M.A., of Falmouth, would discourse this week at Penryn on Spiritualism, and before the arrival of the time for commencing the lecture the chapel was crowded. The evident eagerness to be present was not the result of the interest felt in Spiritualism, for it may be questioned whether one in every score there was acquainted with the subject; even the respected chairman, Mr. G. A. Jenkins, admitted he knew nothing whatever of it. Wishful to become more thoroughly acquainted with the arguments from Scripture against Spiritualism, I attended the lecture, but never was I more disappointed. Notwithstanding the subject was 'Spiritualism tested and condemned by the Bible,' Mr. Douglas quoted only five or six passages from the Old Testament, in proof that the necromancy, &c., practised by some of the Jews was synonymous with modern Spiritualism; the remainder of the lecture, occupying nine-tenths of the time, consisting of abusive comments on random extracts from various Spiritualistic publications, some of the quotations, to my certain knowledge, being given unfairly. It was stated in the public notices of the lecture that discussion or questions would be invited, but had Mr. Douglas seriously intended permitting a discussion, he would not have allowed such a miserable apology for a lecture to drag on until nearly half-past nine o'clock, when everyone was wanting to leave."

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters from "X." and "G.F.G." will have attention next week. The insertion of communications on the following subjects has also been necessarily deferred:—

"Carlyle on Spiritual Affinities."

"Laws of Spirit Communion."

"Missiles Thrown by Unseen Hands."

In connection with the death of General Ney, Duke of Elchingen and Prince de la Moskowa, a story is told in the current number of the *Revue Spirite* of a curious fact of table-tipping in his family. It happened on Monday evening, the 21st February, at the house of the Countess F—— W——. Some one proposed to try table-tipping to get some information concerning the cause of the General's absence, although it was generally believed that he had gone on a wild duck shooting expedition. Having asked the Spirit where General d'Elchingen was, the following was rapped out: "Pool of blood." This made the party think of some hunting accident, and they asked, "Where is this pool of blood?" The answer came: "Cellar." "Is the General wounded?" Answer: "Fichu" (meaning in English "done for"). As may be imagined, these replies caused considerable impression among those present. The next day the family of the General learned of the drama which had taken place at Chatillon—the suicide of the General. A similar version appeared in several of the leading political French newspapers of the 28th February last.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—Cardiff, Sunday, April 17th; London, Sundays, April 24th and May 15th; Belper, Sunday, May 1st; Northampton, Sunday, May 29th; Liverpool, May; Stamford, July; dates not yet fixed.



## Spiritualist Societies.

Secretaries and Presidents of Societies will oblige by informing the Editor of *LIGHT* of any alterations that may from time to time be necessary in the following list:—

### METROPOLITAN.

British National Association of Spiritualists. 38, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C. Mr. Thos. Blyton, Secretary.  
 Brixton Psychological Society. 6, Akerman Road, Brixton, London, S.W. Mr. H. E. Frances, Hon. Secretary, 22, Cowley Road, Brixton, S.W.  
 Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. 53, Sigdon Road, Dalston Lane, Hackney Downs, London, E. Mr. J. J. Morse, President.  
 Goswell Hall Spiritualist Committee. 290, Goswell Road, E.C. Secretary, Mr. W. Towns, 1, Albert Terrace, Barnsbury Road, N.  
 Hackney Primitive Christian Mission. 7, Ellingfort Road, Mare Street, Hackney, E. Mr. C. Rhys Williams, Manager.  
 Islington Home Circle. 70, High Street, Islington. Mr. Hugh Hutchinson, President.  
 Ledbrooke Hall, Notting Hill, London, W. Mr. F. O. Matthews, Manager, 126, Kensington Park Road, Notting Hill, W.  
 Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. Quebec Hall, 25, Great Quebec-street, London, W. Mr. J. M. Dale, Hon. Secretary.  
 South London Spiritual Society. Mr. J. G. Robson, Secretary, 8, Bourne-mouth Road, Eye Lane, Peckham, S.E.  
 Spiritual Institution and Progressive Library. 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, London, W.C. Mr. James Burns, Proprietor and Manager.

### PROVINCIAL.

Ashington Spiritual Society. Mr. G. Scott, Secretary, Ashington Colliery, Northumberland.  
 Batley Carr Association of Spiritualists. Mr. Joseph Armitage, Secretary.  
 Birmingham Society of Spiritualists. Mr. J. Kennedy, Secretary, Oozells Street Board School, Birmingham.  
 Birmingham Christian Spiritualist Society. 312, Bridge Street West. Mr. John Colley, Hon. Secretary.  
 Bolton Spiritualist Association. Mr. D. Cordingley, Secretary, Bath Street, Bolton.  
 Cambridge Association of Investigators into Spiritualism. 7, Fitzroy Street. Mr. James Harpley, Secretary.  
 Cardiff Progressive Library of Scientific and Spiritual Literature. 157, Bute Road, Cardiff. Mr. George Saddle, Proprietor.  
 Cardiff Spiritualist Society. 3, Angel Street, Cardiff. Mr. W. Paynter, Hon. Secretary, 10, Bute Crescent.  
 Darlington. The Lyceum of Psychology. Mr. A. C. Clark, President. Hodge's Rooms, High Northgate.  
 Durham District Association. Mr. James Dunn, Secretary, 68, Simpson Street, New Shildon.  
 Exeolior Society of Spiritualists. Scotland Gate, near Morpeth. Secretary, Mr. G. Hall, Choppington Colliery.  
 Gatehead Spiritual Society. Temperance Hall, High Street.  
 Glasgow Association of Spiritualists. 164, Trongate Street. Mr. John Mc G. Munro, Secretary, 33, Daisy Street, Govanhill, Glasgow.  
 Great Yarmouth Association of Investigators into Spiritualism. 3, Waterpark Terrace, Southdown Road. Mr. R. E. Dale, Secretary.  
 Halifax Spiritual Institution. Peacock Yard, Union Street, Halifax. Mr. C. Appleyard, Secretary.  
 Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire Association of Spiritualists for Inquirers. 2, Caroline Street, Hull.  
 Keighley Lyceum. 51, Worth Terrace, Keighley. Secretary, Mr. A. Morrell, Albert Street.  
 Lancashire District Committee of Spiritualists. Mr. Charles Parsons, Secretary, Hume Street, Mill, Rochdale. Mr. Johnson, Secretary, 153, Mottram Road, Hyde, near Manchester.  
 Leicester Spiritualist Society. President, Mr. E. Larrad, 10, Edwyn Street. Secretary, B. Wightman, 56, Cranbourne Street, Leicester.  
 Leigh Spiritualists' Association, Brown Street, Leigh, Lancashire. Mr. G. F. Turner, Secretary.  
 Liverpool Psychological Society. Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Morris, 35, Cobden-street, Everton, Liverpool.  
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